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Local Government CAO Survey

Feedback from Chief Administrative Officers on the Impact of Core Review Changes to the Agricultural Land Commission

Background

In the past some of the most vocal criticisms of the Agricultural Land Reserve have focussed primarily on the Commission's perceived intransigence in refusing to allow farmland to be removed from the ALR for development purposes. Most of the critics have, quite understandably, been owners of land in the ALR who have had their applications refused and, to a lesser extent, officials of local governments forwarding these applications.

However, the government's recent changes to the ALR system resulting from Core Review are lessening these criticisms.

In March 2003, Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) of local governments with land in the ALR were invited to comment on the changes the Commission implemented 2002/03. A comprehensive questionnaire was sent out, and 85 of 133 CAOs responded.

This exercise did not canvass landowners or wider public opinion across BC, which would have been prohibitively expensive. However, given the key role of local governments in BC's land reserve system and the senior role of CAOs within each government, it was felt such feedback would provide a good measure of the success of Core Review changes to date.

Commission Communications

Two questions were designed to solicit feedback about the ALC's communications activities (see questions 4 and 5).

Our local government partners preferred to receive information firstly through the information brochure Reserve Opinion (by mail or e-mail, but not the website), and secondly from other forms of direct mail. Click here for a sample of comments responding to how the Commission could improve its communications follow.

Most respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the ALC's communications and offered a number of positive comments, such as

- "to date good communication, ALC staff respond within a reasonable time to inquiries/questions" (Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine)
- "we need to know of ALC changes, but don't require enhanced communications" (Golden)
- "we think you are doing a very good job right now" (Logan Lake)

Core Review Goals (question 6)
One of the main objectives of the feedback exercise was to determine whether the goals set for the Commission by Core Review were met. These goals included:

1. Bringing decision-making closer to community.
2. Bringing decision-making closer to the people affected.
3. Improving Commission responsiveness & flexibility.
4. Providing more opportunities for interaction & dialogue.
5. Having decision-makers who are more knowledgeable about regions.
6. Forging stronger partnerships with the ALC.

When asked about the success in achieving these goals in the first year, CAOs replied as follows:

- ✔ On whether decision-making was closer to the community, CAOs were overwhelmingly positive. 67% said it was, only 4% said it wasn't, and 29% said they didn't know or had no opinion.
- ✔ On whether decision-making was closer to the people affected, respondents were equally positive. 65% said "Yes", 7% said "No" and 28% either didn't know or had no opinion.
- ○ On whether there was an improvement in Commission responsiveness & flexibility, CAOs were uncertain, with nearly half (48%) answering "Don't Know or No Opinion". However, amongst those with an opinion, 90% said there had been an improvement and only 9% said there had not.
- ✔ On whether there were now more opportunities for interaction & dialogue, CAOs were positive: 55% said "Yes", 7% disagreed and 38% said they didn't know or had no opinion.
- ○ On whether the changes would result in stronger partnerships with ALC, most respondents (59%) were unsure. Only 31% answered "Yes" and 10% answered "No".
- ✔ On whether decision-makers were more knowledgeable about regions, CAOs were much more positive. The answers to that question were:

Yes	66%
No	6%
Don't Know/No Opinion	28%

Among the most worrisome results were perceptions that the Core Review changes would result in a stronger partnership with the ALC. Only 26 of 85 respondents felt partnerships would be stronger (31%), 9 thought they would not be stronger (11%) and the remainder (58%) either didn't know or had no opinion.

Some of the most interesting findings concerning the Core Review goals came from communities in which previous criticisms of the ALC/ALR had been most vocal. In general these communities' CAOs were supportive of the changes and satisfied with the new system. (Click here to view comments.)

Commission Staff (question 7)
Across the province, Commission staff were found to be extremely helpful, impartial, communicative, professional and courteous.

When CAOs were asked if Commission staff were **helpful** when

dealing with local government officials on applications,

- 56% were Satisfied or Very Satisfied
- 8% were Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied
- 18% were neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied

and the remainder Didn't Know or had No Opinion.

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Asked if Commission staff were **impartial** when dealing with local government officials on applications,

- 44% were Satisfied or Very Satisfied
- 6% were Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied
- 21% were neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied

and the remainder Didn't Know or had No Opinion.

[View Comments]

When CAOs were asked if Commission staff were **communicative** when dealing with local government officials on applications,

- 59% were Satisfied or Very Satisfied
- 5% were Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied
- 14% were neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied

and the remainder Didn't Know or had No Opinion.

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When asked if Commission staff were **professional** when dealing with local government officials on applications,

- 70% were Satisfied or Very Satisfied
- 5% were Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied
- 6% were neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied

and the remainder Didn't Know or had No Opinion.

[View Comments]

Lastly, when CAOs were asked if Commission staff were **courteous** when dealing with local government officials on applications,

- 73% were Satisfied or Very Satisfied
- 2% were Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied
- 5% were neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied

and the remainder Didn't Know or had No Opinion.

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Click here to see comments from specific communities.

Presenting Information (questions 8 to 11)
When CAOs were asked if there was adequate opportunity for applicants to present information in support of their application,

- 43% were Satisfied or Very Satisfied
- 7% were neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied
- 4% were Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied
- 46% Didn't Know or had No Opinion

When asked what more could be done to increase opportunities for

applicants to present information, many suggestions were made, including:

- "Providing the local government and the applicant with a copy of the staff report to the panel is an excellent approach which has improved communication and the opportunity to respond to concerns and issues" (Abbotsford)
- "Decisions should be made in public" (Chilliwack)
- "perhaps consider utilization of local government to meet with applicant and Commission panel members strictly as a resource person to answer questions or to provide information relating to local government bylaws, policies, etc." (Regional District of Central Okanagan)

Click here for more comments.

Question 10 asked "Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the review and processing of applications by ALC staff?"

59% were Satisfied or Very Satisfied

11% were neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied

3% were Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied

27% Didn't Know or had No Opinion

When asked what more could be done to improve the review and processing of applications by ALC staff, most of the comments (good and bad) were about timing.

- "Timing is the only issue. Staff do a good job but it often takes a long time. Regional commissioners are a big step to help the problem." (Kelowna)
- "decrease processing times" (Cariboo Regional District)
- "Number one complaint from pubic is turnaround time. Find application process too long." (Revelstoke)

Click here for more comments.

Landowner/Resident Expectations and Support
Another concern relates to landowner and general public support for the ALR, as perceived by the CAOs. (questions 12 & 13)

When CAOs were asked if they felt owners of ALR land in their community expected the Core Review changes to result in eliminating the ALR, 55% said "No", only 13% said "Yes" and the remainder (32%) didn't know or had no opinion.

However, when asked if they felt owners of ALR land expected the Core Review changes to result in reducing the size of the ALR, opinion was more evenly split: 38% said "No", 31% said "Yes" and 31% didn't know or had no opinion.

When CAOs were asked if they felt owners of ALR land in their community expected the Core Review changes to result in increasing the accessibility of Commissioners, only 9% said "No", 53% said "Yes" and the remainder (38%) didn't know or had no opinion. This is good news, but is also evidence of higher expectations.

When asked if they felt owners of ALR land in their community

expected the Core Review changes would result in decentralizing decision-making, 8% said "No", 50% said "Yes" and the remainder didn't know or had no opinion. Again, the bar has been raised.

With respect to non-farm uses, when CAOs were asked if they felt owners of ALR land in their community expected Core Review changes would result in more non-farm uses in the ALR, 13% said "No", 47% said "Yes" and 40% didn't know or had no opinion.

Finally, when CAOs were asked if they felt ALR owners expected the Core Review changes to result in the Commission being more regionally responsive, only 6% said "No", while 56% said "Yes" and the remainder didn't know or had no opinion. Again, a very high level of expectation.

In addition to asking CAOs to gauge landowner expectations (above) they were asked to estimate the level of support for farmland preservation amongst residents of their community.

The results were encouraging. Of the 82 responses received, 51 felt that residents were either "Very Supportive" or "Supportive" and only 7 felt residents were "Very Unsupportive" or "Unsupportive". This is a ratio of over 7-1 in favour of the ALR. Only 9 of the 82 respondents believed residents were indifferent and only 15 didn't know or had no opinion.

General Comments
Over one-third of CAOs responded when asked for comments or suggestions, click here to view.

Conclusions
While a small number of CAOs expressed dissatisfaction with the ALC's performance in achieving the goals set by Core Review, the majority feel that the Commission is succeeding in that regard. And the vast majority of the Commission's local government partners were satisfied (or very satisfied) with the level and types of communications utilized by the Commission and the performance of staff. Most respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied that Commission staff were helpful, communicative, professional and courteous. Although less than half of respondents were satisfied with staff impartiality (44%) this was several times the number who were dissatisfied (6%).

Among the most worrisome results were perceptions that the Core Review changes would result in a stronger partnership with the ALC. Only 26 of 85 felt they would (31%), 9 said they would not (11%) and the remainder (58%) either didn't know or had no opinion.

Several interesting suggestions were made with respect to improving interactions with staff and Commissioners, particularly involving greater use of e-mail and increasing the number and type of face-to-face meetings.

The results of Question 10 ("Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the review and processing of applications by ALC staff?") were very positive. While 3% were Dissatisfied, 59% were either Satisfied or Very Satisfied.

On the whole the Commission should be very pleased with the high levels of satisfaction expressed by CAOs. There are several areas requiring improvement, and the Commission is committed to

addressing those deficiencies. We can also be grateful for the many excellent suggestions made by respondents, and we will work to incorporate them into the policies and programs of the ALC in the months and years ahead.

Specific Communities Comments concerning Core Review Goals

Some of the most interesting findings concerning the Core Review goals came from communities in which previous criticisms of the ALC/ALR had been most vocal. In general these communities' CAOs were supportive of the changes and satisfied with the new system.

For example, when asked about the ALC's adoption of 3-member panels in each of six regions, **Kelowna** felt it brought decision-making closer to the community and to the people affected by the decisions; improved Commission responsiveness and flexibility; provided more opportunities for interaction and dialogue; created stronger partnerships with the ALC; and provided decision-makers who were more knowledgeable about the region.

Richmond was another pleasant surprise. When asked about the ALC's adoption of 3-member panels for each of six regions, the City felt it brought decision-making closer to the community and to the people affected by the decisions; improved Commission responsiveness and flexibility; provided more opportunities for interaction and dialogue; and created stronger partnerships with the ALC. It registered "Don't Know/No Opinion" when asked if panels provided decision-makers who were more knowledgeable about the region.

Delta, too, expressed strong support. On Commission panels Delta felt it brought decision-making closer to the community (but not to the people affected by the decisions); improved Commission responsiveness and flexibility in terms of the time required for a decision; provided more opportunities for interaction and dialogue; and provided decision-makers who were more knowledgeable about the region.

In **Langley Township** the views of the CAO on Commission panels were similar to t Richmond and Delta. When asked about the ALC's adoption of 3-member panels fc regions, the Township felt it brought decision-making closer to the community and to the people affected by the decisions; improved Commission responsiveness and flexibility; provided more opportunities for interaction and dialogue; and provided decision-makers who were more knowledgeable about the region. It did not feel panels created stronger partnerships between the ALC and local governments.

Outside the Okanagan and the Lower Mainland, in communities that have historically been critical of the ALC, the opinions of the CAOs were similarly positive. Cariboo, Nanaimo, Fraser-Fort George and Peace River Regional Districts all gave the ALC's new panel system and the review/processing of applications high marks.

Comments and Suggestions on Staff

On the helpfulness of ALC staff:

- good for technical information (Cariboo Regional District)
- staff always respond to questions and provide requested information (Burnaby)
- they try, but staff discussions/agreements don't seem to transfer to the Commission table (Chilliwack)
- staff was readily available and willing to spend time answering questions and discussing the application (Coquitlam)
- usually information exchanges are accurate and thorough (Langley City)
- always someone available to clarify process or provide direction (Nanaimo)
- staff changes - not being available (Penticton)
- knowledgeable staff (Quesnel)
- all phone calls and requests for information are promptly dealt with (Richmond)
- they have been helpful (Surrey)
- staff accessible and knowledgeable about our municipality and issues faced (Delta)
- staff very helpful — Gordon Bednard and Julie Glover (Central Saanich)
- staff we dealt with were very knowledgeable about the area, and helpful in finding solutions to problems (Lake Country)
- very responsive to answering telephone inquiries from local gov't planning staff on ALC proposals prior to a formal referral being made to ALC (Mission)
- staff very knowledgeable and helpful (Pitt Meadows)
- our distinct impression is that they don't listen to our comments and they have already predetermined their decision prior to site inspection or meeting with jurisdictional reps (Sicamous)
- always prompt in responding to calls, emails (Fraser Valley Regional District)
- staff were helpful in assisting with application procedures (Greater Vancouver Regional District)
- staff turnover led to less knowledgeable staff working on files that they had not viewed nor been privy to the Commissioners' comments during tour and discussions (Peace River Regional District)
- local government staff a lot of the time have had more experience answering people's questions than ALC staff. Common answer when you ask a question is "have them submit and application" (Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako)
- Responses to staff questions and concerns are returned in a timely manner. Staff has generally been kept up to date regarding applications in process. During the short time that the new Act and revised Commission have been in place, ALC staff have consistently been communicative (Regional District of Central Okanagan)
- the total lack of consultation with the RDCS re: the Ducks Unlimited boundary extension and the entire Courtenay Flats matter - no correspondence from ALC on RDCS staff recommendations (Regional District of Comox-Strathcona)
- a prompt response time (Regional District of East Kootenay)
- our interactions with staff are limited...interaction with staff to date has been satisfactory (Regional District of Mount Waddington)
- poor knowledge of the area and specific circumstances - unrealistic recommendations (Gibsons)
- too prescriptive (Keremeos)
- knowledgeable, accessible (Thompson-Nicola Regional District)

On the impartiality of ALC staff:

- staff allow local government opportunity to forward recommendations on applications without bias (Burnaby)
- they are honest and believe in what they do (Chilliwack)
- staff pointed out factors and issues supporting application as well as those that would

suggest rejection (Coquitlam)
- there is often too much collective memory which stifles the ability of staff to deal with a current problem in a current context (Kelowna)
- general absence of personal views (Langley City)
- staff always present a balanced response to inquiries (Richmond)
- could be more consultative when developing policies; staff availability is not adequate (Surrey)
- staff represent the view of their Commission when discussing issues which have been decided on; prior to that time staff act in an impartial manner dictated by their legislation (Delta)
- new regulation much clearer (Pitt Meadows)
- no obvious changes by staff to adjust to new format - still stuck in past administrative process (Sicamous)
- willing to listen to staff position (Fraser Valley Regional District)
- no issues arose that required comment (Greater Vancouver Regional District)
- seem to be but can't really know that from limited dealings (Regional District of East Kootenay)
- naturally ALC staff are very protective (i.e. and biased) of maintaining a 'no net loss' approach to ALC designated lands proposals (Mission)
- staff have a built in bias toward ALR preservation, therefore difficult to be totally objectiv (Thompson-Nicola Regional District)
- not willing to see our side of the issue (Creston)
- report on latest application very one-sided (Gibsons)
- staff has always behaved professionally and objectively with us (Regional District of Mount Waddington)

On the communicativeness of ALC staff:

- helpful with maps, information, etc. (Cariboo Regional District)
- always respond to inquiries (Burnaby)
- they get back to us in a reasonably timely manner (Chilliwack)
- staff took time to explain policies and procedures; left impression that we were welcome to contact them (Coquitlam)
- sometimes response time to telephone requests are slow (Langley City)
- information events sponsored by ALC are beneficial especially given the rapid changes (Nanaimo)
- staff are very helpful and respond to questions (Penticton)
- staff give honest advice (Richmond)
- staff time constraints the only limitations to communication (Delta)
- very willing to spend time discussing problems (Pitt Meadows)
- only receive responses when we complain - long convoluted (unnecessary) process, mixed messages have been consistently misleading - site visit comments vs. written responses conflict (Sicamous)
- will call us in order to clarify things not just us calling the ALC (Fraser Valley Regional District)
- staff were able to explain the steps required in the processing of an application (Greater Vancouver Regional District)
- definite gaps exist in communication within local government by the Commission (Regional District of Comox-Strathcona)
- not aware of any current difficulties (Regional District of East Kootenay)
- staff have always communicated well with us (Regional District of Mount Waddington)
- there is a propensity to keep ALC decisions confidential until a written resolution has been issued (Thompson-Nicola Regional District)
- slow to react and painfully slow to see our situation (Creston)
- difficult to get in touch with (Gibsons)
- I have good telephone discussions with Martin Collins - views can be exchanged frankly and honestly (Spallumcheen)

On professionalism of staff:

- prompt, courteous (Cariboo Regional District)
- staff, courteous, efficient and helpful (Coquitlam)

- staff act in a professional manner (Delta)
- always dealt with in a high order of professionalism (Pitt Meadows)
- extremely so, to benefit Commission only but appear unapproachable to public citizens or other bodies (Sicamous)
- staff were able to explain ALR legislation and policies and were prompt with responses to questions (Greater Vancouver Regional District)
- appropriate attitude and presentation (Regional District of East Kootenay)
- staff are cooperative within limits, practice ethical behavior and strive to acquire the knowledge and technical support necessary to carry out their responsibilities in an expeditious manner (Thompson-Nicola Regional District)

On courtesy:

- excellent people skills (Langley City)
- polite, friendly (Penticton)
- staff are polite and pleasant to deal with (Richmond)
- staff are always courteous (Delta)
- very helpful and attentive (Pitt Meadows)
- have an intimidating manner to the general public (Sicamous)
- staff appeared to always have time to deal with officials' questions or with the applicant's questions (Greater Vancouver Regional District)
- if proper communication had occurred a more definitive qualitative answer could have been provided (Regional District of Comox-Strathcona)
- because they are! (Regional District of East Kootenay)
- staff have been professional with us, as well as courteous (Regional District of Mount Waddington)
- staff are always friendly, efficient and prompt (Thompson-Nicola Regional District)

Comments made in Response to Applicants Opportunity to Present Information

Question 9: What more could be done in this regard?

When CAOs were asked what more could be done to increase opportunities for applicants to present information, many suggestions were made, including:

- "We often receive phone calls from applicants stating they have just received a letter from PALC asking them to send more information if they want to. They have no idea what other information they can send other than what they submitted with their application. Could the letter be more specific?" (Columbia Shuswap Regional District)
- "local government is not appraised of the outcome" (Sicamous)
- "improve turnaround time on applications forwarded to the Commission" (Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine)
- "I have not heard from an applicant who is dissatisfied with reception received by ALR staff or Commissioners" (Spallumcheen)
- "better communication with local government staff" (Quesnel)
- "ALC handbook is a little daunting to staff and public. The city has tried to provide a quick overview to potential applicants" (Revelstoke)
- "e-mail - keep applicant aware of how the review process is going and when a final decision will be made on an application" (Campbell River)
- "I have never had an issue when I have called" (Kent)
- "on-site meetings" (North Cowichan)
- "applicants are given written notice and opportunity to meet with ALC staff" (Pitt Meadows)
- "applicants should be provided with a copy of the ALC staff report in advance of Commission considerations — thus allowing them to prepare accordingly" (Peace River Regional District)
- "Not sure what interaction may be initiated between an applicant and ALC staff and vice-versa. If we have a concern with a specific application we can ask for more detail." (Thompson-Nicola Regional District)
- "open old file and not require new application and delay to deal with this issue" (Creston)
- "better understanding of local circumstances, soil conditions, damage issues, etc." (Gibsons)

Comments made in Response to Processing of Applications

When asked what more could be done to improve the review and processing of applications by ALC staff (Question 11), most of the comments (good and bad) were about timing,

- "Timing is the only issue. Staff do a good job but it often takes a long time. Regional commissioners are a big step to help the problem." (Kelowna)
- "it still takes a minimum 3 months to get a response from ALC before we can proceed with the application process on our end" (Prince George)
- "decrease processing times" (Cariboo Regional District)
- "staff should be commended for the remarkable turnaround time in bringing applications forward to the ALC" (Abbotsford)
- "Number one complaint from pubic is turnaround time. Find application process too long." (Revelstoke)
- "improve review process and process applications faster" (Campbell River)
- "one application submitted to the Commission in January 2003 has yet to be considered" (Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine)
- "ALC review and processing done very effectively and efficiently" (Pitt Meadows)

A few comments were about issues other than timing, including:

- "Consider all the facts (new & old) and needs of the community and don't preclude the outcome. This can be achieved under the legislation with some flexibility and practicality for a 'win-win'." (Sicamous)
- "greater staff consistency" (Peace River Regional District)
- "local government staff should be contacted to meet with the local panel of Commission when meeting on-site for certain applications, i.e. applications that are contentious with the neighborhood or that will impact the regional district's interests" (Regional District of Central Okanagan)
- "large scale applications necessitate more collaborative land use planning to avoid development of agency positions and/or forced acquiescence on application matters" (Thompson-Nicola Regional District)
- "Panel visits are timely. I do not believe more frequent visits are required." (Spallumcheen)
- "receive a copy of ALC staff report to the Commission" (Richmond)

General Comments and Suggestions

Abbotsford
"the interest of the ALC panel in establishing a new relationship with local government and the panel's openness to dialoguing with local government is to be commended"

Armstrong
"continued flexibility regarding growth issues"

Burnaby
"regulation of soil removal/placement remains an issue given that the Act/regs allow some filling/removal as an outright use and no longer provides for the coordination of processes/approvals between the local government and the Commission for some types of applications"

Chilliwack
"Applicants deserve the right to hear all discussions associated with an application in public. The decision is made behind closed doors, which is unfair."

Columbia Shuswap Regional District
"We would like the Commission to revisit BC Reg 171/2002, part 5, 10(c). It is felt that this section will increase the number of applications under section 21(2) of the Act."

Coquitlam
"I am uncertain whether the community is really aware of the changes to the ALC. Communications program could be considered...although the website is helpful in describing current policies and procedures (which is probably all that the community or prospective applicants want to know)"

Fort St. John
"make sure broader planning spectrum is also considered in decisions"

Gibsons
"make more of an attempt to visit application sites, understand local soil conditions, politics, drainage, etc. to make more informed decisions"

Golden
"Commission dealt with 1 application last year in Golden. Delved into the nature of the business proposed rather than focusing on the ag potential during the hearing. However, the outcome was appropriately reflective of the ag capability and reflected the request of the applicant."

Kelowna
"No, you have a difficult job and try to do it well. You also have good staff who need to be allowed more leeway in solving problems."

Keremeos
"We are not looking behind but to the future to see if the changes create any benefit or it they will only result in a form of downloading."

Kitimat
"I believe residents of northern/coastal communities recognize the provincial significance of preserving sufficient quality agricultural land to ensure the long-term sustainability of this important resource. This awareness and support is not dependant on shared circumstances. Our town has only one recognized farm and it is owned/operated as a hobby business on land outside the ALR.

Only block of ALR land is heavily treed/part of golf course; use is very unlikely to change even in the long-term."

Lake Country
"None in 2002 - our working relationship with the ALC in previous years has been cooperative and constructive"

Langley City
"stronger guidance/direction regarding delegation of authority for subdivision and non-farm use"

Merritt
"on right track"

North Cowichan
"soil removal process has little opportunity for local government input/involvement"

Peace River Regional District
"awaiting revised policies for new regs - written detail; change to title No. on forms for ownership on other parcels owned in the community, rather than the former legal description, can be costly for some who have to pay for title certificate printouts"

Pitt Meadows
"all is well with the ALC"

Prince George
"the staff and Commissioners I have dealt with over the past year have been wonderful to work with, particularly Sherry Gordon and Northern Commissioners"

Regional District of Central Okanagan
"There has been insufficient time to adequately gauge and determine the full impact of the new legislation that came into effect on November 2002. The seminar that was held locally in June 2003 was very informative and provided a useful overview of the new regulations. It would be useful to enter into future discussion regarding the delegation to local government of powers related to ALR applications for subdivision (i.e. homesite severance) and non-farm use."

Regional District of Comox-Strathcona
"Residents are supportive of the ALR but see the LRC as a distant bureaucratic body somewhat difficult to contact and deal with. There's more trust and faith in the role of the regional agrologist. Presentations to RDCS staff were of a sales job on 'new and improved' ALC rather than an explanation of the new policies and approaches."

Regional District of East Kootenay
"only that updated policy information be made available to the public that do not have access to the Internet"

Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine
"Time required by the Commission to consider and make decisions on applications needs to be shortened. ALC needs to be more active in enforcing their decisions"

Regional District of Nanaimo
"define public hearing procedure to fully comply with statutory requirements of Local Government Act with respect to advertising, conduct at the meeting, posting of site, chairing of meeting, participation of public and preparation of minutes"

Revelstoke
"Have raised the issue in the past with the signage requirements and advertisement policies in handbook. As stated in handbook, still too easy for applicant to provide miniscule ad in paper or improper signage."

Richmond

"ALC should approach the Province to request more financial assistance to municipalities to undertake agricultural viability studies. As we are finding out in Richmond, additional planning work is necessary to resolve/remove constraints to farming and to permanently resolve urban-rural conflicts. The benefits are that municipalities will be better able to address problems, thus saving the Commission work and time."

Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District
"decision-making needs to be left with the ALC, not the local government"

Spallumcheen
"The only area of concern is a long-standing one - Specialty Steel Fabricating on Hwy 97A. I recognize enforcement is a difficult area and this 'non-farm, commercial' use has continued and expanded. Council expects that Township, PALC and owner will work together toward a solution."

Squamish-Lillooet Regional District
"We are very concerned with ALC policies regarding 2nd dwellings on parcels in the ALR for farm help or for relatives. We receive numerous inquiries about these policies each week and we are upset with the lack of defined criteria given to local governments as to what constitutes farm help in farm class, size of operation, etc. We are also upset with the enforcement policy on mobile homes as second dwellings for relatives. Anyone can justify a mobile home for a relative even though neighbors know it is not for a relative. If this policy is not enforced by the ALC we would like to allow all 2nd dwellings as mobile homes on ALR lands."

Vernon
"There should be a single document which clearly and simply outlines the ALR regulations, requirements and statutory policies which landowners / local governments must adhere to. A brief description/summary of ALC decisions during a year would be interesting for local government officials to review."

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